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Briefing Notes for Mr. McCloy, 12 October 1966

- I. Presidential letter calls for
"an appraisal of the existing and potential threat to the security of the members of the Alliance."

- A. Briefing will cover:
 - estimate of Soviet/WP threat to Western Europe
 - estimate of Soviet threat to US/North America
 - the question of warning
- B. Objective: to focus on the threat, existing and potential, in fairly general terms, with only that detail necessary to give idea of magnitude or make comparisons with US/NATO forces.

More detailed information can be provided if desired.

II. Estimate of Soviet/WP threat to Western Europe

- A. WP forces immediately available in the forward area

- 22 Soviet divisions in EG and Poland (12 tank, 10 MRD) 305,000
- about 3,000 aircraft, mostly fighters for air defense and ground support. About 900 are current models 143

24 EE divisions
 -9 Czech 74
 -9 Polish 62
 -6 EGA 57
 24
 (12 MRD)
 (12 tank)

1. Missiles and bombers

- a. About 600 MRBM and 100 IRBM, most (90%) in Western USSR.
- b. About 200 heavy bombers, about 900 medium bombers. Heavies probably meant for intercontinental use but could be used against WE.
- c. Some 40 ballistic missile submarines that could be used against NATO targets altho probably intended for use against US.

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2. The Soviet scenario

Tactical doctrine has been based on initial strikes with weapons of mass destruction to eliminate NATO nuclear capability. Followed hard on by rapid advance of armored formations at rates up to 60 miles per day.

To do this means relying on forces in position. As result, GSFG has been shaped as a front in being, capable of quick reaction without reinforcement. EE forces able to assist on flanks of main Soviet attack under Soviet direction.

3. Reinforcement

(DIA prepared to brief in detail this afternoon on WP reinforcement, mobilization, movement factors and warning time implications.)

Trade-off: Maximum surprise, minimum buildup, but also minimum weight of attack.

We believe initial advantage of attack without buildup to achieve maximum surprise would be quickly offset by lack of weight in attack.

If possible, Soviets probably would seek to assemble an 80-85 division force before NATO central region.

--probably include 8-9 from western USSR

--factors: time to assemble rolling stock, needs of civilian economy, confusion

Result: after decision, about 3 to 4 weeks required to deploy an 85-division force under noncombat conditions.

B. Soviet forces

-- 3 to 3.2 million

General Purpose--1.9-2.1

(Ground--1.3-1.5; Air--.2; Naval--.4)

Strategic Def--.4

Strategic Atk--.3

Support --.4

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1. General purpose ground and air forces
 - TO of MRD - 10, 500
 - TO of Tank - 8, 500
 - a) 61 Cat I divs
48 Cat II
109
 - 55 MRD
 - 47 Tank
 - 7 airborne
 - 32 Cat III, all MRD
 - b) Tactical missiles and rockets available at division, army, and front level. Nuclear, chemical, HE warheads. Significant increase in numbers of launchers allocated to ground forces over last few years.
 - c) Air defense uses both missiles and aircraft. Capabilities up: new missiles better aircraft, increased control through semiautomatic systems.
 - d) Tactical Aviation--3, 200 operational aircraft for local air superiority, ground support, recce.
2. General purpose naval
 - 340 subs in g.p. forces (excludes plus - 40 ballistic missile subs).
 - 150 in North
 - 75 in Baltic
 - 40 in Black
 - a) Hampered by need to operate at great distances from home port; restrictive geography.
 - b) Estimate 50 torpedo attack and cruise missile subs could be maintained continuously on station in the Atlantic approaches.
3. Airlift, sealift capabilities modest, improving slowly.

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C. Trend

- pressures to maintain: inertia of tradition; rising importance of ground forces in era of mutual nuclear deterrence; Vietnam.
 - pressures to reduce: needs of civilian sector of economy, partic. if coupled with improved international situations; increasing costs of weapons and their support systems; increasing technical demands.
1. Size of Soviet ground forces probably reduced in overall size (85-115 divisions by 1976) but the remaining divisions will be larger and better units maintained at high combat readiness.
 - increasingly professional, fewer conscripts, longer terms.
 2. Same regarding aircraft.
 3. EE forces will be increasingly modernized with increase in military capabilities. Number of divisions steady, but greater proportion of ready units.
 4. Most recent changes in disposition of Soviet ground forces have been the movement forward along the Sino-Soviet border (Sinkiang, Mongolia, Manchuria) of various units.

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III. Estimate of Soviet threat to the United States/North America

-- Soviets are continuing costly and intensive development of their strategic attack and defense forces

A. ICBM force is growing.

1. 1st & 2nd generation ICBMs -- 220 (140 soft, 80 hard). Construction program ended 1964.
2. 3rd generation coming in: all hard, all in single, dispersed mode. About 100 now estimated operational (for total, with earlier systems, of about 320 operational launchers).
3. Some 350 or more ICBM launchers are known to be in some stage of construction and will be operational over the next 2 years.
4. Thus, by mid-1968, we estimate about 700 operational ICBMs.
5. Estimate: 800-1100 operational launchers in mid-1971, and 800-1200 in mid-1976.

-- This subject to several factors:

- * Soviet concern that building substantially over US total would trigger an over-matching US response.
- * The need for qualitative improvement (survivability, greater accuracy, etc.) will lead to expenditures here, rather than mere addition of numbers.
- * Given the larger payloads of Soviet ICBMs, even parity with US confers superiority in megatons.

B. Missile submarines

1. Present force: over 40 ballistic missile subs with a total of about 130 launchers. About 10 are nuclear-powered, the rest, diesel. Only 2 or 3 tubes per boat. Range of missile only some 400 miles, but 700-mile missile coming in.

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2. A new ballistic missile class may be under construction. Estimate 8 or more tubes with a 1 to 2 thousand mile missile. First could be operational in about two years.
3. Cruise-missile subs: the focus of recent construction efforts. About 50 of these, half nuclear powered. With 4, 6, 8 tubes for a missile of about 450 miles range. Primarily anti-ship, but can be used against land targets.
4. Sub fleet has been slow to take to deep water, but extended patrols increasing. Estimate Soviets could keep about 10-12 SSB continuously on station by early 70's.
5. By 1976: 60-70 ballistic missile subs
65 cruise missile subs

C. Long Range Air

1. Present heavy bomber force (includes tankers):
90 Bison, 110 Bear, total 200.
2. Estimate Soviets could put about 100 heavies over target areas in US on two-way missions.
3. No new heavy bomber known to be under development. Force levels will probably begin to decline unless new factors -- such as US deployment of an ABM system -- caused Soviets to upgrade strategic value of bombers.

D. Significance.

1. Soviet ICBM force now going in clearly reflects a decision -- probably made in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis -- to deploy a powerful retaliatory capability.
2. The current program of ICBM deployment probably will enable the Soviet leadership to feel confident, by 1967 or 1968, that they have an assured destruction capability (that is, even if the US struck first in a surprise attack, the USSR would be able to devastate the US in retaliation).

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3. The estimated developments in the Soviet missile submarine force will enhance this capability.

E. Strategic defense.

1. Soviets have made the decision to begin ABM deployment. System at Moscow probably will have some initial capability in 1967 or early 1968 although the total system won't be completed until 1970 or 1971.
2. Moscow system probably has good capability against a limited, unsophisticated ICBM attack. Its capability against Polaris, saturation attacks, and advanced penetration techniques probably not great.
3. Other possible ABM developments -- Tallinn system.
4. Whatever limitations of present systems, Soviets probably will deploy ABM widely over next 10 years.
5. This may lead in time to a significant damage limiting capability.

F. Significance.

1. Soviets will probably have what they regard as an assured destruction capability against the US in the next year or two.
2. Over the next decade, their efforts at an active strategic defense against ballistic missile attack will probably yield them some capability to limit damage to the USSR.
3. These developments would lead to a more binding mutual deterrence, and thus may increase the relevance of the general purpose forces.
 - recent Soviet writing and statements reflect a loosening of K's idea that any war involving the great powers automatically became general nuclear war. Possibility of limited nuclear or conventional war under mutual nuclear deterrence acknowledged.

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4. Thus, the tripartite review and any future examination of NATO coming at time when Soviets are having a resurgence of interest and faith in their ground forces.

IV. Warning

- the problem is two-fold: to collect the indications of impending attack, and to evaluate them accurately.
- there is the separate but related problem of convincing the policymaker.

A. Warning of Soviet-initiated hostilities in Europe

1. Maximum surprise attack, using only MRs and IRs, could be made with no warning.
 - however, Soviet defensive preparations in anticipation of US retaliation might give some clue.
2. A ground forces attack on WE could be launched with minimal chances of warning if only forces now in EE, were used.
 - an advance buildup would give some warning: reinforcement of LOC, increase in movement of supplies to West, tightening of security measures, etc.
3. Warning would depend to some degree on whether Soviet preparations and attack came at time of calm or of tension.
4. Chances of obtaining indications for warning are enhanced by growing independence of EE in both political and military matters, and by their demands for a greater part in Warsaw Pact planning.
 - USSR couldn't mount attack on WE without knowledge of at least some allies.